

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T CAIRO 8679

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, US, UR
SUBJECT: SECRETARY-GROMYKO MEETING ON THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: SECTO 04139

SUMMARY: BRIEFED SADAT AND FAHMY ON SECRETARY/GROMYKO MEETING USING POINTS CITED REFTEL. FAHMY ARGUED PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION NO LONGER PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO RECONVENING GENEVA; INSTEAD "TERRORIST" BEGIN NOW IS. SADAT PLEASED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS AND WELCOMED IDEA OF MONTHLY MEETINGS TO KEEP SOVIETS CALM. HOWEVER, SOVIETS SHOULD BE KEPT IN DARK ON DETAILS. AS HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, ONLY USG AND GOE WORKING TOGETHER CAN ESTABLISH PEACE IN THE AREA. WE SHOULD KEEP IN TOUCH ON WHAT WE SAY TO SOVIETS ABOUT THESE MATTERS. I AFFIRMED THIS CONSISTENT WITH OUR THINKING AND RECALLED WE HAD DONE SO BEFORE AND AFTER SECRETARY/GROMYKO TALKS. I REFUTED FAHMY'S CHARGE THAT IN PAST WE HAD TOLD SOVIETS MORE THAN WE LET ON TO EGYPTIANS. SADAT SEEMED SATISFIED. FAHMY HAS NOT YET SAID ANYTHING TO US ABOUT HIS UPCOMING MEETING WITH GROMYKO. I INTEND TAKE APPROPRIATE OCCASION REMIND HIM OF SADAT'S SUGGESTION THAT WE KEEP EACH OTHER INFORMED, BUT THAT SUCH CONSULTATIONS MUST
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BE TWO-WAY STREET. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING SEPARATE TALKS WITH FAHMY AND SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA PAST TWO DAYS, I BRIEFED THEM ON THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH GROMYKO USING POINTS CITED REFTEL. ALTHOUGH I HAD ALREADY BRIEFED FAHMY ON SUNDAY EVENING, HE WAS ALSO PRESENT AT YESTERDAY'S MEETING WITH SADAT. I ASSURED BOTH

SADAT AND FAHMY THAT SENSITIVE MATTERS WHICH HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THEM HAD NOT BEEN REVEALED TO SOVIETS AND THAT THE VANCE/GROMYKO TALKS DID NOT IMPINGE OR LIMIT OUR BILATERAL TALKS WHICH WILL CONTINUE. THEIR OBSERVATIONS ARE REPORTED BELOW:

2. AT FIRST MEETING, FAHMY PICKED UP OUR POINT THAT THE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION REMAINS PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO RECONVENING GENEVA. HE CONTENDED THIS IS NO LONGER THE CASE. THE PRESENT MAJOR OBSTACLE TO RECONVENING GENEVA WAS EMERGENCE OF BEGIN, WHOM HE BRANED A "TERRORIST." HE PROPOSED TO DECLARE PUBLICLY THAT GOE WILL NOT GO TO GENEVA IF BEGIN IS THERE. (WHEN HE PROPOSED SUCH A STATEMENT TO SADAT FOLLOWING MORNING, SADAT TURNED IT DOWN.) FAHMY ALSO SHOWED SOME INTEREST IN FORMULATION OF "FINAL BORDERS" BEING "SECURE BORDERS" AND ASKED WHAT "FINAL BORDERS" WE HAD IN MIND. HOW DID THIS SQUARE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S COMMENTS ABOUT "POLITICAL BORDERS" AS OPPOSED TO "SECURITY BORDERS." I NOTED THAT FORMULATION USED WITH GROMYKO WAS CLEARLY BASED ON UNSC RES 242 AND THAT DETAILS WERE NOT DISCUSSED. AS HE KNEW FROM RECENT WASHINGTON TALKS, PRESIDENT CARTER HAS GIVEN SOME THOUGHT TO THE VIABILITY OF A TWO-TIER BORDER CONCEPT AND EXPLORED IT WITH PRESIDENT SADAT. TO BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, NO FINAL POSITION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN ON THIS MATTER.

3. SADAT, WHEN I BRIEFED HIM FOLLOWING DAY, EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS. HE WELCOMED THE IDEA OF MONTHLY MEETINGS
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OF THE AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW. THIS SHOULD ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE OF KEEPING SOVIETS CALM, BUT SOVIETS SHOULD ALSO BE KEPT IN DARK ON DETAILS. AS HE HAD TOLD PRESIDENT CARTER, THE ME PEACE EFFORT SHOULD BE HANDLED BY USG AND EGYPT. IT WAS EVEN UNWISE, IN HIS VIEW, TO BRING THE SYRIANS OR JORDANIANS INTO THE MATTER TOO MUCH. THE SYRIANS IN PARTICULAR WILL SIMPLY PASS IT TO THE SOVIETS, AND SOVIETS WILL PUSH THE PALESTINIANS TO UNDERMINE THE WHOLE PROCESS. ME PEACE, SADAT REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED, COULD BE ESTABLISHED ONLY BY USG AND GOE WORKING TOGETHER. PROCEDURAL DETAILS HE HAD MENTIONED TO PRESIDENT CARTER REMAIN EVEN MORE VALID AFTER BEGIN'S EMERGENCE. NOTHING SHOULD BE PUBLICLY "DECLARED" UNTIL THE PAST PHASE. WE SHOULD KEEP EACH OTHER INFORMED ON WHAT WE SAY TO THE SOVIETS ABOUT THESE MATTERS.

4. I AFFIRMED THAT THIS WAS VERY MUCH IN LINE WITH OUR THINKING. I SAID THAT WE HAD EARLIER, AT FAHMY'S REQUEST, GIVEN HIM THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT SECRETARY VANCE PROPOSED

TO SAY IN GROMYKO DURING GENEVA TALKS. WE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE INTERESTED IN HEARING WHATEVER THE SOVIETS MAY BE TELLING OUR EGYPTIAN FRIENDS ON THESE MATTERS.

5. AT THIS POINT FAHMY INTERVENED TO CLAIM THAT WE HAD IN THE PAST TOLD SOVIETS MUCH MORE THAN WE HAD LET ON TO EGYPTIANS. THUS, FORMER SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD ALSO ASSURED HIM REPEATEDLY THAT WE WERE NOT SAYING ANYTHING SUBSTANTIVE TO THE SOVIETS. THEN, HOWEVER, WHEN FAHMY MET WITH BREZHNEV AND GROMYKO, THEY CLAIMED THAT FORMER SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD BEEN SENDING DETAILED INFORMATION. THIS WAS A SOURCE OF SOME EMBARRASSMENT TO THE EGYPTIANS. I ASKED IF FAHMY HAD ACTUALLY SEEN THESE ALLEGED BRIEFINGS. WHEN HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD ONLY BEEN TOLD ABOUT THEM BY THE SOVIET LEADERS, I SUGGESTED THAT HE SHOULD TAKE SUCH CLAIMS WITH A GRAIN OF SALT. IT WAS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD CLAIM TO BE BRIEFED IN GREATER
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DETAIL ON US POSITIONS, PARTLY IN ORDER TO PROBE FOR INFORMATION. I THOUGHT THAT BOTH PRESIDENT SADAT AND HE COULD BE ASSURED THAT WE HAVE NOT REVEALED ANY SUBSTANTIVE DETAILS TO THE SOVIETS AND WILL CONTINUE THE STRATEGY DEVELOPED DURING THE WASHINGTON TALKS BETWEEN PRESIDENTS CARTER AND SADAT. SADAT EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION.

6. COMMENT: AS REPORTED CAIRO 8273 FAHMY DID NOT TELL US IN ADVANCE OF HIS UPCOMING MEETING WITH GROMYKO AND HAS STILL NOT SAID A SINGLE WORD TO ME ABOUT IT. I GAVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY SEVERAL TIMES IN THE LAST TWO DAYS TO DO SO, BUT HE AVOIDED THE SUBJECT. INTEND TO TAKE AN APPROPRIATE OCCASION TO REFER TO SADAT'S SPECIFIC SUGGESTION THAT WE KEEP EACH OTHER INFORMED OF PERTINENT TALKS WITH THE SOVIETS AND TO REMIND HIM THAT WE HAVE DONE SO BUT HE HAS NOT. IF SUCH CONSULTATIONS ARE TO HAVE ANY MEANING, THEY MUST BE A TWO-WAY STREET.
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